

Points East

By Ike Adams



I'm home again after spending nearly two weeks in the hospital and a rehab facility recovering from 2 strokes that put me down on October 28. I'm actually getting around the house unassisted but typing is still a major challenge so I'm writing this, one carefully-considered key stroke at a time. So, when I complete a word and later decide it's not the one I wanted, I'm leaving it in anyway because it is too physically difficult to go back and make appropriate changes. Suffice to say that the strokes did nothing to alter my inherent laziness.

I once painted an entire room the wrong color. Loretta had bought over 30 gallons of paint from which one could have made a virtual rainbow. Robin egg Blue for one room, mulberry for another, dandelion for yet another. Name any color besides black and it was in the mix. The guy who mixed the paint had put a brush stroke on the lids to indicate what color was in each can. I like blue and figured it would look good in our bedroom so that's just what I did. I found out later that it was supposed to be key lime pie, thereby ending a budding career in home décor.

Loretta is also one of those people who believe that anytime you get a Christmas card, you're obligated to send one back. She gets irked if we get cards delivered on Christmas Eve because she's out of time to make the turnaround. We have 3 wide first-floor interior entranceways between kitchen, dining room, hallway, living room etc. She uses scotch tape to hang Christmas cards on their trim and facings throughout the house. I have yet to see anyone stopping to open the cards

so they can yelp, "Hey you got a card from Aunt Maggie. She must have forgot all about me." In which case Lo would say, "Well it came on Christmas Eve, but I'll send her one next year."

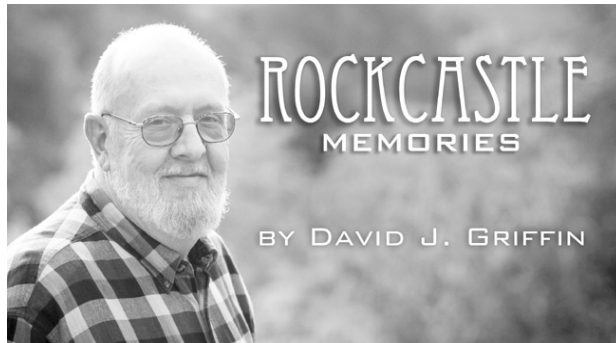
Anyway, I have been getting tons of get-well cards and while I was in Telford Terrace, there in Richmond, I looked forward to mail call almost as much as I did mealtimes. The meals were, in fact, better than I've had in many restaurants. Nobody is going to starve to death in Telford. My roommate said he lost weight. I gained it back for him.

So every day I had a stack of cards but I did not hang them on the door face. Loretta had sneaked around and spread Telford's address to everyone she knows. So I'll fess up. I'm really glad she did. There's nothing quite as wonderful as knowing that people care about you just because you're you. At least that's what the cards led me to believe.

And I will never again laugh at a baby learning to walk. I will say this though, it's no fun being an adult toddler because if you fall, you don't bounce right back up and start all over on the spot. Thanks to the wonderful staff at Telford, I didn't fall one time because someone was always hanging onto me as I learned to walk again. And when I graduated from wheel chair to rotolator, I felt like I had won an Olympic event.

If you don't know what a rotolator is; it's a fancy walker with hand brakes that also has a seat built in. When you get tired you can lock the wheels and sit in it. Thanks to my new friend Lee Ann Adams (too pretty to be kin to me) I cruised the

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It's the Small-town Life for Me

When I left Mt. Vernon High School to attend the University of Kentucky in May of 1962, I was often asked where I was from. If I answered, "Mt. Vernon," people would say, "Where in the world is that?" In order to avoid that follow-up question, I began instead to respond with "Renfro Valley," because almost everyone knew where that was located.

I am very proud and have been blessed to hail from a small town in Kentucky. In those days, the population of Mt. Vernon was 1,106. I can still picture the population sign that was located at the edge of town - near where McDonalds is today. The reason that I remember it so vividly is that someone took a marker and drew a line through the "6" on the population sign, replaced it with a "5" and noted "John Dale's gone." The reference was to a fellow by the name of John Dale Helton, who had left to attend college.

Living in a small town has many advantages. Everyone knows you by name, and most were familiar with your entire family. I remember being in Cox Hardware browsing for a pocket knife when I saw Mr. John Cox quietly pick up the old phone on the wall. He called my mother to see if it was okay with her to sell me a knife. During those times, most adults looked out for the children of the entire community.

For most of my life, I have continued to reside in relatively small Kentucky towns. I started my teaching career at Campbellsville High School and then moved to Mt. Sterling, where I lived for thirteen years while teaching and coaching at Mt. Sterling High School. Once again I knew almost everyone there. Because I have lived in smaller communities for most of my life, I have made many friends from across the Commonwealth. It is a wonderful thing to have friends in several different towns.

I was reminded again of the pleasures of living in a small town while listening to Justin Moore's song, Small Town USA. The first verse explains:

A lot of people called it prison when I was growing up

But these are my roots and this is what I love
Cause everybody knows me and I know them

And I believe that's the way we were supposed to live.

Wouldn't trade one single day here in small town USA.

Living in Mt. Vernon had many of these positive features: familiarity with most of the families in town; everyone is friendly, and (back then) there was almost no crime. Young people were dropped off on Main Street to walk to all of the businesses where we usually shopped, including Kelsey's restaurant, the Dinner Bell, Cummins Grocery, Maggard's Drug Store, and even the Vernon Theater. When we were ready to go home, we simply called our parents, and they came after us. Even Allen Jackson, who seems to have retained his country roots, recently made the statement, "I don't think I've changed that much from a kid who grew up in a small town."

When I became a teenager and started to drive, I could usually find most of my friends by looking at the local gas stations, city restaurants, or my friends' houses. In those days, I knew every teenager's name who lived in Mt.

Vernon. Most of them were like me, locating our friends by "dragging" Main Street. There were no traffic jams, almost no sirens to listen to, and there was peace and quiet as a general rule. We entertained ourselves by driving around in our cars while listening to our rock and roll music.

Even now, living in a small town has many advantages. For the past two decades, my wife and I have lived on a mountain top just outside of Stanton, Kentucky. I am blessed to have many friends, and we try to take care of each other when we can. As most of you have read, I acquired a 1954 Chevy this summer and have been working on its restoration it for several months.

A couple of weeks ago, one of my good friends, Bud Parks, asked me where I was going to keep my Chevy during the winter months because he is aware that we do not have a garage. I explained that we were going to put it under a tarp to keep it out of the weather. Bud said, "I have a three-car garage and only have two vehicles, so you can store your Chevy there." That is a real friend, and I am more than grateful to have a spot to protect my "baby." A few days later, another friend, Damon Adams, stopped me at a local restaurant and said, "If you want, you can keep your old Chevy in my garage for the winter." I could hardly believe it. Two offers in a town as small as ours.

Kind and generous friends are such a blessing. But that is usually the way life is in "small town USA." It is a lot like living in Mayberry.

(Cont. to A4)

On Call

By:
Rick Branham



First I want to apologize for missing last week. I have been sick and was not able to do the column. Can you believe I had hand, foot and mouth disease? I was surprised to hear of it since it is rare for an adult to get the virus. I was a sick person for over a week and glad to be back to a healthy state.

We have had a busy time at the firehouse since the last edition of On Call and this week I want to focus on what the fire department has been up to since that time. We had highs and lows over the past few weeks.

The fire department did a small chili fund raiser on Trick or Treat night back on November 1st. We didn't raise a lot of money but we all had full stomachs afterwards. That was the night my sickness began. I wasn't able to go out and trick or treat this year with my kids which was lousy. Our monthly fish fry went well as it usually does. The fish fry is a great fundraiser for our department. It's become such a staple in our community that everyone looks forward to the first Saturday of the month. Next month will be our annual breakfast instead of a fish fry. The first Saturday of December we hold an all you can eat country breakfast, be sure come out for that.

An event we have com-

ing up this coming Saturday on November 16th is not a fundraiser but it has become an annual tradition. It is the free community dinner that Brodhead Volunteer Fire Department and Brodhead Baptist Church co-sponsor. For the past several years now we have teamed with the church to put on a free community dinner that has all the traditional thanksgiving fixings. We deliver plates to people that are unable to make to the firehouse and prepare for the ones that make it down. It all starts at 6pm this Saturday November 16th at the Brodhead Fire Department.

Over the past few weeks we have had our fair share of tragic incidents. I lost a good friend in the accident at the intersection of 1229 and 150 last month. He was a great individual, caring father and will certainly be missed by all who knew him. I did not make it to the accident when we were paged out and I have to say that I am almost glad I was not. That is what's difficult about what we do, what we volunteer to do. We respond to calls not knowing what is in store for us and when we get on scene, seeing someone you know that is hurt or worse is not something that is easily shaken from your

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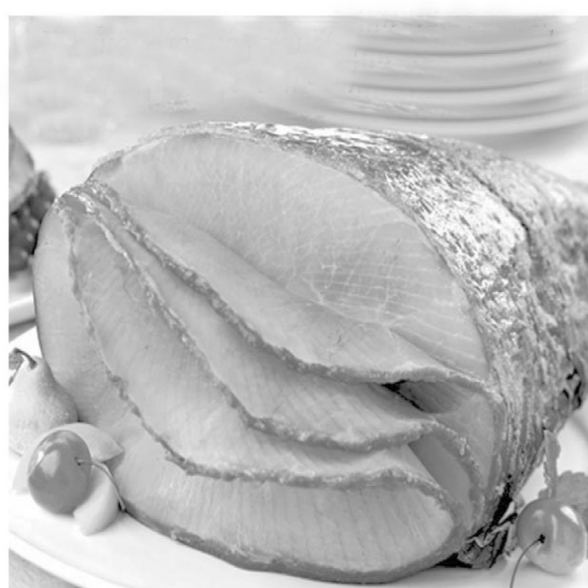
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